

TEAM SPIRIT AWARD

Teamwork is essential in order to accomplish the many goals of this agency. 1,200 people throughout the state are responsible for numerous tasks throughout the day, month and year.

The "Team Spirit Award" strives to recognize a group of team members who have gone beyond the call of duty, with enthusiasm and zest for their work.

The accomplishments of the MIS team have reached far and wide during the past few months, and include:

- Recovery of phone lines, fax lines, the email system, and FACTS after the phone lines at the Youth and Family Center campus were severed during a construction accident on Route 141.
- Keeping up with FACTS database growth;
- Working "programming magic" to extract useful data from an old system to facilitate development of the FACTS Client Payment Application. (This ensures on-time and proper payments to foster parents and others who help take care of our kids.)



Congratulations to the recipients of the Team Spirit Award: Seated (1st row, left to right) are: Keith Temler, Theo Morgan, Harris Qureshi, Rob Newnam, John Willis-Drozowski. (2nd row, left to right): Ryan Ward, Robert Wilkerson, Matt Roberts, Bharati Vadhar (Back row, left to right): Deborah Flad, Gene Mitchell, Hal Miller, Larry Harris, James MacMicking, and Mike Land.

- Performing the WIndows98/ Office2000 migration on 1,200 computers in less than a month's time;
- Reducing monthly avoidable HelpDesk calls to less than 1.5 per 100 employees.

"In MIS we all have different skills and we share what we know and learn with each other," said Debbie Flad, senior application support specialist and webmaster. "With computer technology moving so quickly, it's good to have a pool of folks to call on to troubleshoot a problem."

Secretary DeSantis recognized the "behind the scenes" efforts of the MIS crew. "Their work is often the type that goes unnoticed — until the day when someone can't log onto their computer, use their email, or access the database — Then, we all sit back and wonder, 'What would we do without the team at MIS?'"



CHILD ABUSE REGISTRY BEING REVIEWED

Delaware's Child Abuse Registry has been the source of public attention and scrutiny during the past few months. The registry is a database of names of individuals who have been substantiated for abuse or neglect of a child. In July of 2001, a Child Abuse Substantiation workgroup began meeting to examine and recommend changes regarding which individuals placed on the registry are reported out, and for how long.

"The workgroup's recommendations are not intended to second-guess the investigation policies and procedures of our Division of Family Services," said Carlyse Giddins, director of DFS. "Those remain sound both legally and ethically. Rather, they serve to provide individuals the opportunity to appeal being placed on the registry and to be removed after a certain amount of time."

MISSION STATEMENT

OUR MISSION IS TO PROVIDE LEADERSHIP & ADVOCACY FOR DELAWARE'S CHILDREN.

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VISION STATEMENT

THINK OF THE CHILD FIRST!

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"Seen and Heard" is the quarterly newsletter of the Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families (The Delaware Children's Department).

Tell us what you think: **1-302-633-2500**
e-mail: seenandheard@state.de.us

Ruth Ann Minner, Governor, State of Delaware

Cari DeSantis, Cabinet Secretary
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State of Delaware
The Department of Services
for Children, Youth and
Their Families

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Wilmington, Delaware 19805
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for Children, Youth and
Their Families



SEEN & HEARD

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SERVICES FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH & THEIR FAMILIES • THE DELAWARE CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT

FOSTER PARENTS OF THE YEAR: NORISA & LAWRENCE JACOBS

How's this for a routine day? Wake up at 5 a.m., get seven children — seven — ready for school. At 8 a.m., welcome nine — yes, nine more children into your home for daycare. At 3 p.m., greet your children as they arrive home from school. At 5 p.m., say goodbye to the kids in daycare. Prepare dinner. Help with homework. Go to bed. Start day all over again.

This schedule may not seem all that out of the ordinary to some, but the inspiration behind this kind of care giving is extraordinary. Norisa and Lawrence Jacobs are parents to seven children - five foster children (they have legal guardianship of three whom they will raise until age 18) and two children of their own, a 12-year-old daughter and a 16-year-old son. In addition, Norisa and her husband run a daycare center for nine children in their Georgetown home.

The Jacobs are the Delaware's 2002 Foster Parents of the Year, and the State's representatives for the National Foster Parents of the Year award. "They're very lovable children. But when they come into care, many of them are angry," said Norisa. "I tell them I know how they feel - They're away from their mommy or daddy. I let them know that they're going to feel angry, but we'll work on that. It's OK."

Norisa and Lawrence both lost a parent before they were 10 years old. Their loss inspired them to help children whose lives have been turned upside down by a traumatic event. They have been foster parents since 1997. Since that time, they have opened their homes and their hearts to 11 children — from 18 months to 11 years old. "We were a little surprised by the nomination, because we're just doing what we love," said Norisa. "We just go about our daily routine of caring for the children and we do it with joy," she added.

As foster parents, they have:

- Transitioned two children from foster care into an adoptive home, providing the support and guidance needed for the children to succeed;

- Served as co-trainers for Foster Pride/Adopt Pride, the training program for prospective foster parents;
- Provided respite services for other foster parents;
- Mentored foster parents, offering information and advice;
- Met with the Family Services director to provide information on difficult placements and services needed;
- Conducted ongoing recruitment for foster parents within their community.



The Jacobs Family. Norisa and Lawrence Jacobs, with three of their seven children.

Debbie Barrett, the Jacobs' foster home coordinator said, "They really

understand the needs of children and can help them through the grieving process and to deal with separation and loss. Lawrence "is wonderful at building a child's self esteem," said Barrett. Norisa noted that, "We both realize that there's more than one side to these children, and what we have to do is bring that other side out." The Jacobs represent everything a foster parent should be, said Barrett. "I appreciate everything they do and I have enormous respect for them." Norisa returned the compliment. The Family Services staff and the foster care network "have been very supportive when I needed them," she said. "We're glad they think we're doing such a good job. We'll continue doing good work and taking care of children."

**Give a child a Future with Hope. Become a foster parent.
Call the Delaware Helpline, 1-800-464-HELP (4357)**

CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR: LAURA PEPPER

She is compassionate and sensitive to the needs and welfare of foster children. They look up to her and cherish what she does for them. She has helped them prepare for exams, their senior prom, and college. She is the one who receives visits, calls and cards saying "Thanks for being my Mom when I needed one."

This is how Laura Pepper is described by her coworkers — but to really put into words how she has made a difference in the lives of so many children, is next to impossible.

A Family Service Assistant II at the Shipley State Service Center in Seaford, Laura is a role model to her coworkers, and an inspiration to others. Laura has been named the 2001 Delaware Children's Department

"Thanks for being my Mom when I needed one."

A foster child of Laura Pepper

own flesh and blood," said Pepper. "I refuse to let them be treated any differently than my own children."

Foster children need to know that someone cares for them and that they are special regardless of what they've been through, said Pepper.

"In fact, they are stronger than most because they are survivors. Sometimes it takes years to convince them of this and sometimes, you can never convince them," she added.

Pepper's coworkers have lauded many of her accomplishments and her work for children including:

- Her outstanding "connection" and relationships with children;
- Her efforts to work with families, which has made a "multigenerational impact" on the children and parents on her caseloads and the communities in which they live;
- Her expertise with FACTS (Family and Child Tracking System); and
- Her willingness to go beyond "the call of duty."

Laura's compassion and charity have not gone unnoticed. In addition to fulfilling her role as a family service assistant, she supports many community service events and humanitarian causes. She has tutored elementary school students, spends many weekends attending activity fairs, coordinates adopt-a-family programs, and delivers Thanksgiving baskets to the needy.

"She is a wonderful example of someone who truly lives our vision to 'think of the child first,'" said Secretary DeSantis. "She has set some remarkable examples for her coworkers, her families and the children she helps."



DSCYF employee of the year

SPRING 2002

FROM THE SECRETARY



Our motivation is clear — If Delaware doesn't change how it supports kids in need, we may lose them forever. Each day we maintain the status quo is surely a day of continued suffering for some child. We must continue to Think of the Child First. We are making great strides towards meeting the needs of 21st century children.

Through the efforts of all staff, and our working groups, opportunity reviews, and strategic initiatives, the Children's Department is making the changes necessary to keep children safe, give them a stable home life, and enhance their self esteem — what a great sense of hope for their future!

As we close out the spring of 2002, members of our General Assembly will be considering the Governor's Recommended Budget for fiscal year 2003. We are grateful for their past support and anticipate being able to address several issues in the months to come including:

- staffing needs at the New Castle County Detention Center;
- implementing the next levels of the Governor's Foster Care Task Force recommendations; and
- preparing to open the new Stevenson House Complex in November

During the remainder of 2002 and beyond, we will begin to take some bold steps to better meet the needs of our children and youth. These new initiatives will include:

- Re-engineering prevention and early intervention services
- Re-engineering community services in the juvenile justice system
- Shifting services from hospitals and residential treatment centers to outpatient services (when appropriate and in the best interest of the child)
- Designing management financial monitoring systems.

We've accomplished a great deal for kids, and although there's much more that needs to be done, I know we've got the right staff, support, and spirit to do it!

Carrie DeSantis

DATES TO NOTE

County Chats with Cari:

June 18, 10-12, Kent County (Polytech School - Adult Education, "The Looking Glass" Woodside)

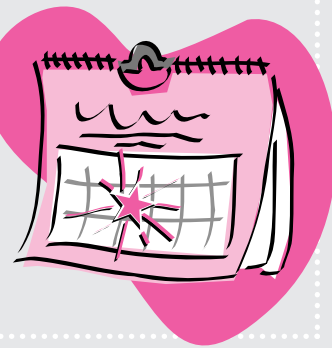
September 12, 9-11 a.m.,
New Castle County (Place TBA)

IdeaFest 2002:

Dec. 12, Kent and Sussex counties;
Dec. 17, New Castle County

Managers Meetings:

June 11, Sept. 5, Dec. 3 (Places: TBA)



ARTIST'S CORNER

This poem was written by Jessie, a 17-year-old at Ferris School. Ferris students are encouraged to write poetry as an appropriate way to express their emotions. Poetry readings are held several times a year, where parents and staff are invited to hear the students' works.

"HOW I LOOK AT MY LIFE"

How I look at my life might not be quite right
How I look at my life makes me mad
so I run but I can't hide.
In the shadows of brick
How I look at my life.
I tried being good but I turn out bad
How I look at my life
I try to make the people I love happy of me
but they are sad.
How I look at my life
I wish I knew the future but not it's (sic) past
How I look at my life
I sure am glad
I made it through all these years of broken glass

SPRING 2002

ON THE RIGHT TRACK All Aboard for Success!

Over 500 Participants Attend 12th Annual Prevention & Early Intervention Forum

A former gang member dropped out of school, was in and out of jail, and then overcame these adversities to become the youngest judge in Michigan history. He was the keynote speaker at the state's annual prevention forum.

Judge Gregory Mathis, who hosts his own court-TV program, is committed to helping troubled youth in and out of the courtroom. His message for youth who have made some bad decisions in the past? "You can overcome life's obstacles," said Judge Mathis.

He encouraged the young men from Mowlds Cottage, the step-down facility from Ferris School, to finish school and develop a trade skill. "Have a plan and keep the faith," he added.

Over 500 child advocates — counselors, health care providers, teachers, legislators, faith-based members, and prevention coordinators, to name a few — attended the prevention forum to discuss intervention strategies for children at-risk.

The theme for the 12th annual Prevention and Early Intervention Forum, held on April 23 and 24 in Dewey Beach, was "All Aboard for Success." Conference speakers encouraged participants to "jump on the prevention bandwagon" or — train, in this case — to help children, youth and families "stay on the right track."

Bruce Wright, community development administrator for First State Community Action Agency in Georgetown, said "We oversee about nine youth programs, so talking to our partners to learn how we can better serve kids in our communities will help us keep abreast of changes in the prevention field."

"Prevention efforts are becoming much more significant in the system of services for children," said Scott Rosas, administrator of the State's Office of Prevention and Early Intervention. "By bringing together our community partners and generating ideas and enthusiasm for intervention strategies, we can help parents and families help their children."

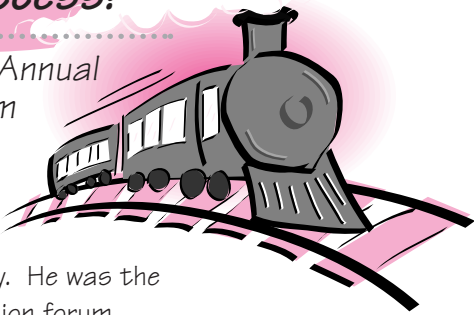
DELAWARE CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT

More and more people are referring to us as the Delaware Children's Department. The switch from the lengthier "Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families" to "Delaware Children's Department" is an informal one, (without legislative change). However, the briefer title is catching on with our partners and the public — and is helping people to consistently and appropriately identify us.



"What can you do?"

Want to help Delaware's children?
Call 633-2501, or log onto www.volunteerway.org.
To mentor a child, call the Delaware Mentoring Council,
866-336-3686.



FOSTER PARENTS: Thank You!

By the time she was 11 years old, Francine Cournos was robbed of her parents by a pair of tragic deaths. Placed in foster care by relatives too disinterested to bother with her, she drew strength from the indelible example of her mother's courage in the face of breast cancer... to grow into a successful, happy adult. (Back cover, "City of One" by Francine Cournos)

Francine Cournos, M.D., has an "honest and compelling story about her own experience as a foster child. Many foster parents have never heard or felt a child's perspective of placement," said Darlene Lantz, foster care program administrator, who recommended Dr. Cournos as the featured speaker for this year's recognition event. "Her message will be very insightful and helpful for them. She helps people see the journey into (foster) placement from a child's point of view."



Francine Cournos, M.D.

Dr. Cournos shared her story with more than 300 foster parents on April 27, as the keynote speaker of the annual foster parent recognition program in Dover. A former foster care child, she is now a professor of clinical psychiatry at Columbia University. She also runs a community-based mental health program.

"What foster parents do is a heroic task," said Dr. Cournos. "It's a difficult job, but they are really making a profound difference in the lives of children."

Carlyse Giddins, director of the Division of Family Services emphasizes the significance of the extraordinary efforts of foster parents everyday.

"Foster parents continue to step up to the plate to do whatever it takes to care for kids. They are incredibly generous individuals," said Giddins. "The improvements we have made in the Delaware foster care system during the past few months have been tremendous."

Some of those changes, initiated by Governor Minner's Foster Care Task Force last May, include developing community cluster homes, establishing emergency homes, and adding specialized training for foster parents who want to care for challenging teens.

"These enhancements will strengthen foster care and help build the continuum of services we need to serve 21st century kids," said Secretary DeSantis. "With the support of hardworking foster parents, staff, and partners who 'think of the child first,' our foster care system can continue to offer children and youth a safe place to live and a sense of hope for their futures."

SEX OFFENDER NOTIFICATION

The Children's Department is participating on a task force considering appropriate notification of sex offenders in the community. Currently, when a public school receives notification of a sex offender from law enforcement, it is the school's responsibility to share that information with parents of the students in their district as well as staff.

Since 1994, Delaware has required the names of convicted sex offenders be placed on a registry. The Delaware State Police maintains the registry, posting all names on its website in a searchable database.

Earlier this year, the Associated Press reported that the Supreme Court is considering the constitutionality of Internet registries listing convicted sex offenders who had completed their punishment. The ruling could affect Delaware and dozens of other states that publish the names, addresses or other personal information about convicted sex offenders.

On April 17, 2002, the task force is presented its recommendations to the Delaware General Assembly.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES: UPDATE

Continuum of Care — This initiative team, focused on designing a system that detects early-on the problems or opportunities of each child, and addresses them in a holistic manner. It is documenting services currently in existence, against needs. Next steps include examination of what is missing, and who should provide it, so that we may advocate for system enhancements.



DEPARTMENT RECOGNIZES NOMINEES FOR EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR



Bryce Bunce, Youth Care Worker Supervisor
CHILD MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Bryce is a positive "can do" person who consistently performs his job responsibilities in a timely manner and at a very high level. He has brought a creative touch to his job, by working with staff and youth to paint murals on the walls of the Middletown Residential Treatment Center. This, and other forms of artistic expressions have helped youth to feel competent and proud of their abilities, which in turn, boosts their self-esteem. Bryce is a very committed employee — to his work, to his staff, and most importantly, to the youth he serves.

Rob Newnam, Telecommunications/Network Technician Supervisor
MANAGEMENT SUPPORT SERVICES

As head of the Help Desk unit, Rob is responsible for ensuring that each of the 1,200 Department staff has a computer that is fully-functioning at all times. In less than a year, Rob devised a system that significantly reduced HelpDesk calls by more than 50%, thus freeing technicians from the phones to work with department staff in other ways. Rob's technical competence and "service with a smile" upbeat demeanor makes him among the best at making technology work for the staff who help children and families.



Nancy Patterson, Management Analyst I
YOUTH REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

As accreditation manager, Nancy has led New Castle County Detention Center through several successful audits by the American Correctional Association. Before opening the doors for auditors, many long hours of work are required by every member of the auditing team. Nancy provided ongoing support for everyone involved, and reviewed reports for each of the 358 standards (whew!) to ensure the ACA would receive the information it needed. Nancy also adapts to challenges with a positive attitude and considerable patience. Her efforts continue to make the detention center a safe environment where youth can learn.

2001 EMPLOYEE SURVEY

78% of DSCYF employees are satisfied or very satisfied working for the Department — an increase from 70% from last year. Overall satisfaction rates by Divisions is as follows:

Family Services:	83%	(2001 = 81%)
Management Support Services:	79%	(2001 = 72%)
Child Mental Health Services:	73%	(2001 = 68%)
Youth Rehabilitative Services:	74%	(2001 = 59%)

As in 2001, the two most meaningful items to DSCYF workers are: the kind of work we do, and supportive supervision. A big thanks to everyone from the Organizational Health Initiative to everyone who completed a survey. Your feedback is necessary to help us make the strategic plans necessary to serve children of the 21st century. Looks like we're in the right direction. Results of the survey can be found on the Department Intranet site: <http://intranet.state.de.us/kids/survey.htm>



Pete Coe, musician, songwriter, and dance instructor, plays the accordion while youth from the Terry Children's Psychiatric Center perform the "Yorkshire Longsword Dance" with two of their teachers. Coe visited the Terry Center in March to teach children about music and dance. Suzi Wollenberg, music therapist at the Center said "folk dancing enables the kids to work as a team. It's very therapeutic."

SPRING 2002

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The caseload ratio for probation officers in the Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services has increased to an average of 60 youths on probation per case-carrying staff. Needless to say, higher caseloads limit the time spent with each youth and the effectiveness of Probation Officers working with juveniles.

In this issue, the Team Spirit Award goes to the core team of Mike Cattermole, Joe Conaway, Lisa Distefano, Shirley Lerner, Kim Martino, Debra O'Neal, Charlita Shamburger, Rick Shaw and YRS Director Nancy Pearsall for rassing the alligator and winning.

The frustrations of our Probation staff led to a 2-day retreat where 34 members of Community Services assessed its service delivery against best practice. They produced a plan to reengineer Community Services to provide better service to kids in our care through more appropriate caseload distribution among staff, and to do it within existing resources. The changes aim to enhance public safety, impact on youngsters on probation, and job satisfaction for Probation Officers. The plan, as well as the effort to produce it, brought high praise from Secretary DeSantis. It has since been presented to key staff to the Governor.

"Kids will have better access to their probation officers and more intensive community services," says Nancy Pearsall, Director of Youth Rehabilitative Services. "It wasn't easy, but it was important to everyone in the room that we overcome this challenge."

Currently, staff have a mixed bag in terms of a caseload. They are responsible for kids needing a range of oversight. The reengineering plan call for caseloads of kids needing consistent levels of service. "Youth and their families will be assigned based on their risk and needs, instead of a one-size-fits-all mentality," says Shirley Lerner.

"This will allow a better bond. Kids will know that they are not just kids who have to be seen. They'll see that the probation officer cares and is putting more time into assisting them in getting their lives on track," adds Charlita Shamburger, who notes that staff will have more job satisfaction. "Most of the complaints we heard had to do with not enough time with the youth due to high caseloads resulting in too much paperwork/computer time. Now they'll be able to spend more time with the people in their care."

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VISION STATEMENT

THINK OF THE CHILD FIRST!

To do this, the plan assigns smaller caseloads to staff who will focus on kids needing more intensive services.

The team process in itself had great benefits for all involved.

"Working with all levels of staff, from the frontline to our Division Director, has given everyone a better perspective of the issues we deal with in the unit," says Lisa Distefano. "The frontline staff have a better idea about the budget process and constraints, and management has a better idea about the day to day difficulties staff face when their workload is unmanageable."

"This is a most ingenious initiative," says Mike Cattermole.

"This has been an excellent experience for me professionally, and it was lovely to collaborate with such a diverse group. We all have very unique qualities that we bring to the team."

Rick Shaw says the whole effort demonstrates that "staff input does count, and people listen when ideas are put forth in a positive and constructive manner."

The Team Spirit Award is well deserved by these folks.

"The staff identified a problem, put their heads together and came up with a viable solution. This group has done a terrific job — we can all be proud of them. We need more of this kind of collaboration," said Secretary DeSantis.



The Team Spirit Award goes to (left to right, back row) Nancy Pearsall, Joe Conaway, Kim Martino, Lisa Distefano, Rick Shaw, (front row) Charlita Shamburger, Mike Cattermole, Debra O'Neal and Shirley Lerner. Their collaboration will create improved community services for kids based on staff recommendations.



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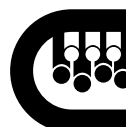
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SEEN & HEARD

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SERVICES FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH & THEIR FAMILIES • THE DELAWARE CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY



Transformation Under Way

The Delaware Children's Department has accomplished a great deal, especially over the last 12 months to better manage our resources to better meet the needs of the kids we serve. Most of the progress has been made in small steps but with significant results. We have lots of which to be proud (see box) and none of it was possible without the dedication, talent and teamwork of the people who are the Delaware Children's Department, and our partners who are willing to do business differently. We are making sound business decisions to provide more effective service to more children. Today, more children are served in their homes or communities. Of those for whom treatment has meant service far from home, more are being served closer to Delaware.

Beware the Flying Monkeys

We are literally transforming the Delaware Children's Department from a 1970s child welfare system to one that recognizes and meets the needs of 21st Century children. This is no small feat, and will not be accomplished without some discomfort. Most of you are familiar with the wonderful children's story The Wizard of Oz. As you will recall, Dorothy finds herself in a strange and amazing place called the Land of Oz. She must travel to the Emerald City to see the wizard to get to her destination-Home. She sets off on a journey that is sometimes quite pleasant and often quite frightening. There are many obstacles placed in her way but she is determined to reach her destination.



Brains, Heart and Courage

We are not unlike Dorothy.

Like Dorothy we have to get home. Home has been defined by everything I heard when I first came here last year: I heard it from you, I heard it from everyone in the department through employee surveys and I heard it from our community partners.

We all agree. Our ultimate destination is: a child-centered, holistic system of care. With your input and support of the Governor and Legislature, we have the opportunity to set the course to reach that destination.

The Delaware Children's Department is committed to a child-centered, holistic system of care that can meet the needs of 21st century kids. We began our journey with four separate and distinct silos, and little collaboration or communication among our divisions. To transform the Department, we need to "Think of the Child First" both literally and strategically.



Our five strategic initiatives are:

Child Focused System,
Holistic Service,
Inspired Workforce,
Leading Edge Management, and
Dedicated Partnerships. This is how our committed workforce with a big heart can work smarter and summon the courage to traverse the path that will lead to our vision of a child-centered, holistic system of care. Inside this newsletter, you will find a visual representation of how the action steps supporting these initiatives will lead us to our goal.



STEPS TOWARDS THE VISION

- Opened Therapeutic Group Home
- Expanded foster care, including YRS kids
- Created clusters of foster families
- Opened six emergency foster care homes
- Dedicated group home for girls in Sussex County
- Expanded outpatient mental health services
- Bringing kids back to Delaware
- Reengineered probation services
- Earned the Delaware Quality Commitment Award
- Improved employee satisfaction by eight points
- Reversed a 39-month growth in deficit from \$9.7 million to \$2.7 million
- Saved \$5 million dollars through home/community-based vs. residential care
- Managed casual/seasonal and overtime usage to save \$1 million dollars
- Reduced fleet expenditures 10%, or over \$120,000
- Earned exemption from budget cuts
- FY '03 Budget supports:
 - 60 new positions in YRS
 - More foster care reform
 - Expanded base budget

Emerald City

It is most encouraging that our message, our vision, is getting out: Think of the Child First. We can only achieve our mission when families, community partners, and other stakeholders think of the child first as well, and the whole village is engaged in raising our children here in Delaware. I hear staff at all levels, service providers, legislators, and advocates using our Vision statement as a guiding principle, acknowledging, as we do, that every child needs safety, stability, self-esteem, and a sense of hope.

Our Emerald City is a Vision of a child-focused system of care that Thinks of the Child First. We have to get there to get home and fulfill our mission of providing services for Delaware's children.

This Vision embraces the notion of interdivisional collaboration around children in crisis, holistic assessment and service delivery. This includes a full-array of public and private services and supports to enable children to reach their fullest potential, and department operations that support the front-line workers' ability to meet the needs of the 21st Century children.

No Place Like Home

You recall we revisited our mission, and revised it:

We provide leadership and advocacy for Delaware's children. Our primary responsibility is to provide and manage a range of services for children who have experienced abandonment, abuse, adjudication, mental illness, neglect, or substance abuse. We endorse a holistic approach to enable children to reach their fullest potential.

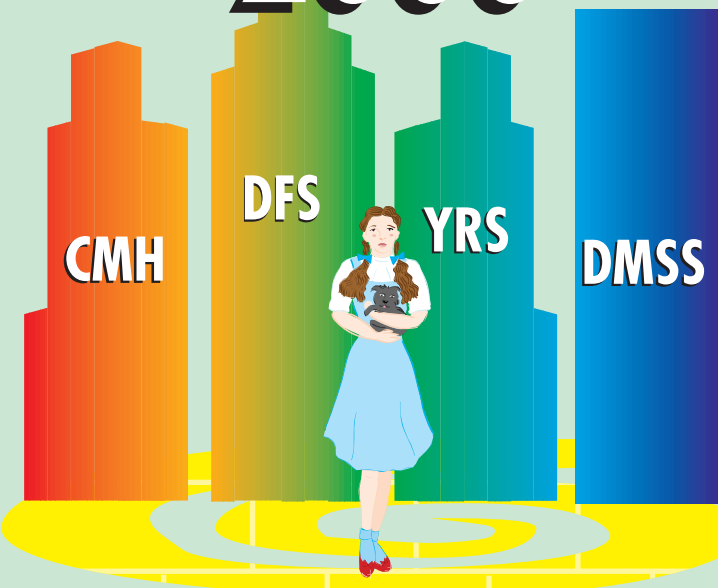
This amended statement of mission acknowledges our primary responsibility as well as our commitment to advocacy for all of Delaware's children, to help prevent children from needing our services, or to help them better succeed after our care.

It is what they want. It is what we want. Together, we can do this for the children.

Cari DeSantis

SUMMER 2002

2000



To meet the needs of
21st Century children, we must...

Think of the **CHILD** First

Child Focused System

Making sure Delaware has what kids need to succeed!

ACTION STEPS:

Inventory existing services

Identify gaps

Plan how to fill gaps
(do/buy/partner/advocate)

Establish on-going review process

Holistic Service

One Child, One Plan, One Team

ACTION STEPS:

Develop uniform screen & pilot

Implement SENSS deptwide

Develop and implement integrated process to ensure kids get services

Evaluate child outcomes

Inspired Workforce

A happy workforce helping kids succeed!

ACTION STEPS:

Align performance & professional development plans

Develop & implement recognition plan

Develop workforce competencies

Evaluate communication strategies

Leading Edge Management

Getting the biggest bang for the buck for the kids' sake!

ACTION STEPS:

Develop report card measures

Develop leading financial & resource utilization indicators for contractual and personnel

Develop cost of success measure

Dedicated Partnership

Partnering with the village to raise Delaware's children.

ACTION STEPS:

Inventory community resources

Collect & disseminate preferred practices

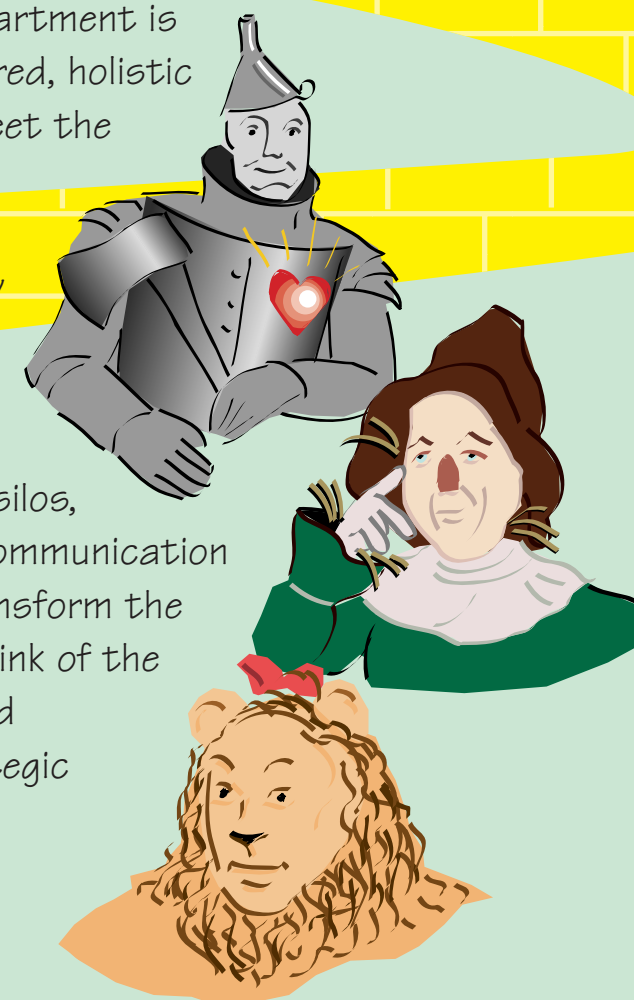
Pilot community partnerships in target areas

Expand partnerships statewide

The Delaware Children's Department is committed to a child-centered, holistic system of care that can meet the needs of 21st century kids.

Much like Dorothy in the Wizard of Oz, we must follow a path filled with obstacles to reach our destination.

We began our journey with four separate and distinct silos, and little collaboration or communication among our divisions. To transform the Department, we need to "Think of the Child First" both literally and strategically. Our five strategic initiatives are Child Focused System, Holistic Service, Inspired Workforce, Leading Edge Management, and Dedicated Partnerships. This is how our committed workforce with a big heart can work smarter and summon the courage to achieve our vision of a child-centered, holistic system of care.



2004